

Library of Congress

1st St. SE, across from the U.S. Capitol Between Independence Avenue and East Capitol Street Southeast

Washington, D.C.

Metro Stop: Capitol South



The [Library of Congress](#) was established as a legislative library in 1800, but grew into a national library in the 19th century and today has one of the largest collections in the world, preserving a universal collection of knowledge and creativity for future generations.

The Library of Congress occupies three buildings on Capitol Hill – the Thomas Jefferson Building, the John Adams Building, and the James Madison Memorial Building. It houses approximately 128 million items on 530 miles of shelves and serves as a resource for thousands of Americans every day. About two million researchers, scholars, and tourists visit the Library of Congress each year.

The highlight of a visit to the Library of Congress is the magnificent Great Hall of the Thomas Jefferson Building, which rises 75 feet from the marble floor to the stained glass ceiling. Marble columns, staircases, mosaics and paintings make this one of the most beautiful public buildings in America. In addition, visitors can wander through the many [exhibitions](#) the Library has on display as well as see historic items on display, such as the Gutenberg Bible.

Times of Operation

All Library of Congress buildings are open Monday through Saturday and are closed on Sundays and federal holidays.

The [Visitors Center](#) hours are 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday, and is closed on federal holidays. The Center is located inside the west front entrance of the Thomas Jefferson Building. The entrance is under the granite archway, 1st Street, ground level. Visitors can obtain a self-guided map from the Visitors Information Desk to tour the Thomas Jefferson Building on their own or take a free guided tour.

Free guided public tours are available on a walk-in basis Monday through Saturday, except on

federal holidays, at 10:30 and 11:30 a.m.; 1:30 p.m., 2:30 p.m., and 3:30 p.m. (although there is no 3:30 p.m. tour on Saturdays). No advance reservations or tickets are required, and these free tours are open to individuals and small groups with no more than 10 participants. Tours begin at the [Visitors Center](#) inside the Thomas Jefferson Building. Visitors are advised to arrive at least 15 minutes before the start of a tour in order to clear entrance security. Visitors will be given an in-depth tour of the Great Hall and be able to view the Main Reading Room from above. The tours last about one hour and are fully accessible. For further inquiries, contact the Visitor Services office by [email](#) or by telephone at (202) 707-8000 (voice) and (202) 707-9956 (TTY).

Groups of 10 to 60 participants may reserve private tours with advance notice by contacting the [Visitor Service Office](#) , or calling (202) 707-0919. These tours are designed for organizations and schools (fifth-grade level and above). Reserved group tour times are offered Monday through Friday, at 9:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., and 1:00 p.m., subject to availability.

[Congressional Reserved Tour Information](#) □

Library of Congress Links

- [Library of Congress Website](#)
- [Visitor's Information](#)
- [Accessibility Information](#)
- [Exhibitions Currently on Display at the Library of Congress](#)
- [Online Tour of the Thomas Jefferson Building](#)
- [American Treasures of the Library of Congress](#)
- [Online Exhibitions](#)
- [American Memory Collection](#)

Places of Interest Nearby

- [Folger Shakespeare Library](#)

- [U.S. Supreme Court](#)
- [U.S. Capitol](#)
- [U.S. Botanic Garden](#)

[Return to Tours and Tickets](#)